

Dragonfire™

Software for DMs

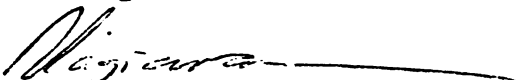
**Bring Your Computer
to the Dark Ages**

FOR THE APPLE II SERIES AND
COMMODORE 64/128

Note to Apple and Commodore Owners:

Due to differences in the way different computers allocate memory and storage of data, Dragonfire II will run differently on the Commodore 64, Apple II and IBM PC. In particular, the IBM version version uses more "Windowing" and "pull-down menus" and therefore costs more. We are working on making these advanced features available for other machines. It is our policy to offer upgrades to all current owners as soon as new products become available.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Magicware", followed by a long horizontal line.

Magicware

DRAGONFIRE

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DESIGNED BY ERIK BRYNJOLFSSON WRITTEN BY TIM FARLOW

GETTING STARTED

Dragonfire is a complex program that will probably take you some time to fully master. You would be well-advised to invest some time reading this manual carefully to take full advantage to its powers.

To start up, simply boot the disk. A summary of commands is available by typing "?". A list of monsters or characters can be obtained by typing "C". You might start by generating a few monsters and characters by using the "get" command (see below). You can then battle them with the "battle" command (see below). This is what you will be doing during most sessions. But to make Dragonfire truly useful, you should customize it to your world using the editor. You can add your own monsters, NPC's and even encounter tables. This should all be done well in advance of any gaming session so that it will all be available during play. If you intend to add a lot of new monster species, put some thought into the field names (like "dexterity" or "treasure type") that will be best for your system, since it is difficult to change them later.

COMMODORE 64 USERS:

To get started, simply insert your Dragonfire diskette into drive A and type: load "hello",8,1. The computer should respond with the prompt ready and then you should type run. You're ready to go!

Note: It might be a good idea to use only capital letters if you have the option. Dragonfire will understand lowercase but will consider names using capital letters as different from names using lowercase letters. e.g. "dragon", "Dragon" and "DRAGON" are all different monsters in the computer's mind.



LET'S SEE...THE NEXT TROLL IS ATTACKING JOE
WHO HAS A MAGIC SHIELD AND HEAVY ARMOR
BUT THE TROLL HAS A BONUS TO HIT
BECAUSE OF HIS SPEED, AND HIS
SWORD, I BELIEVE,
IS MAGIC. SO LET'S
SEE, HIS BONUS
IS TWO, SO
SUBTRACT...



COMMANDS

? Help

This command gives a brief summary of the basic commands and what they do. It is a useful reminder if you forget how to execute a particular function.

A Set Attacker.

This command is used to choose an attacker for use in the Battle sequence (see B). You do not need to type in the whole name of the attacker, just select his number (on the left-hand edge of the screen), and his name and all other appropriate battle statistics will automatically be used by the computer. These statistics, like hit points, will automatically be updated when the battle is over. You must already have some monsters or characters on the screen from which to choose the attacker. Attackers can be either monsters or characters.

B Battle.

This command brings you into battle mode to resolve combat using common adventure gaming techniques. It requires that an attacker and a defender already be chosen.

Once in battle mode, you have six options:

1) B to battle. The attacker will take one swing at the defender. If he hits, damage will be rolled. The value for "soak" will be deducted from the damage rolled, and the result is subtracted from the defender's hit points. Standard D&D (D&D is a trademark of TSR, Inc.) does not use soak, so for that system, soak should be set to zero (0). Dragonfire rolls whatever die or dice are appropriate for the attacker to determine damage.

2) R to roll. If you are using a different system or just want to "roll" some dice, this utility will randomly generate the appropriate number. It accepts rolls in the following format:

AdB(CdD)...+E

where A,B,C,D and E are whole numbers and d is the letter d.

Examples: 1d10 will role one 10-sided die

2d23+3 will role two 23-sided dice and add 3 to the result.

2d8(1d10)(1d2) will roll 2 8-sided dice, one 10-sided die and one 2-sided die and add them all together.

1d100 rolls percentile dice.

Typing "R3d6<return>" will generate a number between 3 and 18. Thereafter, typing "R<return>" will generate another random roll of the same type.

3) S to swap attacker and defender. This utility saves keystrokes when the attacker and defender switch.

4) P to change plusses. In certain situations, the attacker may have plusses or minuses to hit or to damage. This utility lets you modify them for the length of the battle. Note that these adjustments will follow the character even after "swapping" (see above). If a character or monster always has a plus or minus to damage (e.g. because of strength bonuses), that adjustment should be made to his record (e.g. change damage:1d8 to damage:1d8+2 by using the editor.

5) H to change the defender's hit points.
If you are not using the built-in system, you can manually change the defender's hit points with this command.

6) Type Q to quit. This will bring you back to play mode.

C Catalog.

This command will give you a list of all the monsters if you are on the monster screen or all the characters if you are on the player screen. You may also respond with "C" whenever you have to choose a name of something stored on disk. This command will give a list of files (monsters, tables, species, whatever) that are appropriate responses to the computer prompt.

Example: type "GNM" (get new monster) and the computer prompts you with "monster type?". If you type "C" followed by <return> the computer will give you a list of monster types that are already created.

D Set Defender.

This command is analogous to A (Set Attacker) described above. It will fill in the statistics of the monster or Character whose number you choose for use in the Battle utility.

E Edit.

This command is usually not used during a gaming session, but rather before or after one when the DM is creating monsters, tables and characters. Choose what you want to edit from the menu. To create a new character, monster, species or table, simply choose a name that hasn't been used yet (you can use the C command to see what names have been taken) and the computer will automatically generate one. You can then go back and edit it to your liking.

Be careful to use the proper format in the first several fields because they are used in the Battle utility (see the sample monsters and characters on disk). You can enter anything you want in the other fields. Characters also have the capacity to carry numerous items. You can save space by grouping more than one item per line.

VERY IMPORTANT

The DM should apply some serious thought to which fields he wants to include to customize the monsters and characters to his system. You can change the names of the fields (e.g. rename "dexterity" to "agility" or even "deity") but this will make all the monsters or characters created with the old names invalid. Therefore, a wise DM will set the fields the way he wants them once, at the very beginning, and not go back and change them frequently.

Character and monster edit can be used to edit a specific individual. You will want to use this to enter your player characters, recurring non-player characters, special monsters, and "pre-rolled" monsters and characters.

The species and character default editors are used to create whole classes of individuals. You can specify rolls (see R roll for proper format) for various characteristics, and the computer will roll that number when a new individual of that type is created. This is the utility you use to create whole new classes of monsters at a time. Design your own or modify those you read about in fantasy books.

Special note: When entering comments, the editor will only read up through the first comma. To make it read past commas, precede the whole comment with a double quotation mark (").



J.D. Hays
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The table editor has numerous creative uses. You choose a roll to index any number of results and then fill in each of the results. It's perfect for encounter tables, magic tables, saving throws, etc. Tables can be linked indefinitely by using the entry "T>newtable" where "newtable" is the name of any other table you've made (be sure not to put in any spaces around the ">"). When that entry comes up, the computer will randomly roll on "newtable".

For example, let's say the table "ENCOUNTERS" has the following entries:

1 through 3 BEAR
4 through 6 T>GIANTS

and the table "GIANTS" has entries of numerous types of giants. If the computer rolls a 4, 5, or 6 on "ENCOUNTERS", it will then go to the "GIANTS" table and choose a random giant.

It is usually not a good idea to link more than two or three tables in a row this way, or getting a result might take too long. When you create new tables, you should use an indexing roll that is much larger than the actual number of entries. That way, you leave room for expansion. 1d100 is usually a good choice. Multiple dice can be used to generate a bell curve, making the entries in the middle of the table more likely to turn up.

F Change Fields displayed

Dragonfire enables you to display three fields (or characteristics) on the player screen and three fields on the monster screen. Each field is a vertical column headed by the field name. To change a displayed field, type "F" followed by the number of the column to change (numbered from left to right), followed by the name of the new field. If you forget the names of the fields you can choose from, you can type "C" to get a catalog of current field names.

Example: You want to see armor class instead of soak in column 3, type "F3SOAK". Remember to capitalize the new field names.



G Get a Monster or Character.

This is probably one of the first commands you will want to use each session. To get a monster or character that you have saved to disk type "GOM" or "GOC" (Get Old Monster or Character). To have the computer generate new ones right on the spot, from a species you created earlier, type "GNM" or "GNC". This is a great way to generate random encounters.

Example: to generate an encounter of three orcs led by one ogre type "GNMORC3" (which will generate totally random orcs based on your inputs to the species editor (see above)) and then type "GNMOGRE1".

You can also mix and match old and new monsters. Monsters will be numbered starting with one at the beginning of each session. This will give you an idea of how many monsters you've thrown at your party so far. Be careful not to confuse the number following the monster with the number to his left which should be used to choose monsters for battle or deletion. If you save a randomly generated monster to disk, it's a good idea to give him a new name so he won't be confused with monsters generated in later sessions with the same name.

L Load a table into memory

With this command, you can load a previously generated table into memory. A random result from that table will be displayed immediately. To get other random results from this same table at any time, simply type "T". No need to reload the table. Only one table can be loaded into memory at a time.

M Go to Monster screen

This command simply displays the screen of monsters that you have retrieved for this session with Get New Monster ("GNM") or Get Old Monster ("GOM"). The monster screen is kept separate from the player screen for two reasons: 1) to enable more individuals to be readily accessible. 2) More importantly, so that DM's can keep monsters and their potentially secret names and stats away from the wandering eyes of his players.

P Go to Player screen.

Same as M (go to monster screen) except used to switch from monster display or party/character display.

Q Quit.

Use this to leave Dragonfire. Make sure you update your characters and monsters before leaving the program, or they are gone forever. Dragonfire will give you one last chance to think things over before it becomes impossible to retrieve your work.

R Roll Dice

This utility allows you to quickly and easily "roll" dice. You just enter the dice you want rolled, and the computer adds them up. Once one type of roll is entered, you can just press "<return>" to keep generating new rolls of that type.

Rolls are accepted in the following format:

AdB(CdD)...+E

where A,B,C,D and E are whole numbers and d is the letter d.

Examples: 1d10 will roll one 10-sided die

2d23+3 will roll two 23-sided dice and add 3 to the result.

2d8(1d10)(1d2) will roll 2 8-sided dice, one 10-sided die and one 2-sided die and add them all together.

1d100 rolls percentile dice.

Typing "R3d6<return>" will generate a number between 3 and 18. Thereafter, typing "R<return>" will generate another random roll of the same type.

S Save

This command will save either a monster or character from the display to the disk. Use this when a character changes stats due to battle and should be updated, or when you decide to save a randomly generated monster or character for future use. Remember that if a character or monster with that name already exists, the old version will be permanently destroyed and replaced with the new version.

T Table

This command will roll a random result or item from the currently loaded table. To load a table and for more information, see L (Load) and E (Edit, especially section on tables).

W Wipe the display and redraw.

Occasionally, in some computers, the screen display will become disorganized, with writing where it shouldn't be. To restore the display, type "W".

X Delete a monster or character from the display.

Use this command to remove dead, retreated or otherwise unnecessary monsters and characters from the display. Dragonfire does not automatically do this, so that you can allocate treasure or make other use of individuals until you decide. Remember, that a deleted character or monster cannot be recalled unless you saved him to disk before using this command. When deleting large numbers of individuals, it is usually fastest to start from the bottom of the screen and work your way up.

Z Free memory available.

This command tells you how much memory has not yet been used by the program and the monsters, etc., that are loaded into memory. If you have a computer with limited memory, you may want to check this number periodically to make sure you don't run out of memory and crash the program. Also, the program tends to run more slowly when little memory remains, so deleting unnecessary monsters and characters may speed Dragonfire up. If you do run out of memory, the program will survive, but anything that you haven't saved, will be lost.

Dragonfiretm

is not complete
without the

Handbook of Horrorstm

Look for it at your local dealer

or write:

Magicware
P.O. Box 1181
Cambridge, MA 02238

Send us your comments & suggestions
Help spread the word about Using Computers
for Adventure Games. Tell a Friend about

Dragonfire

Dragonfire is a revolutionary new software aid for fantasy role playing games. Using **Dragonfire** and a personal computer, a Gamemaster can quickly and easily:

- * generate monsters and characters
- * resolve combat and encounters without rolling dice
- * determine treasure and weather
- * customize the program completely and easily to any gaming system
- * create encounter tables and rapidly generate encounters
- * roll complex combinations of dice instantly
- * dozens of other features.

Dragonfire

Your party is making their way gingerly toward the Swamp Pits of Doomstone. You hit a key on your computer keyboard - an encounter is indicated! Seconds later, before the players have a chance to find their dice, **Dragonfire** is generating a customized party of monsters to threaten your hapless players. Your fingers dance effortlessly on the keyboard as your party enters melee with the advancing hoard, but **Dragonfire** easily masters the bookkeeping of combat and is ready to award treasure should the party triumph in battle.

Dragonfire frees you for the creative side of Gamemastering. And it does it using any monsters, any characters, in any gaming system. All at your command. Isn't it time you stopped gaming in the dark ages?